

489 W. 6th St.
Claremont, Ca 91711

April 15, 1974

Dr. John Gleason
Department of History
Pomona College
Claremont, California 91711

Dear Dr. Gleason,

In the early 1960's when I sat in your classes in the History of Western Civilization and the History of England, there was a confidence and optimism in the air, that somehow gave the sweep of past centuries a culmination in our present age. Eager, thoughtful and reverent we considered ourselves, and in those exciting Kennedy years, we were somehow filled with the enthusiasm of the Anglo-American mission, the vision of a Locke, a John Stuart Mill, a Bertrand Russell, a Churchill and a Bevan, that for all the mistakes and setbacks, we would somehow "muddle through" to a better world. You would sit on your desk, your long legs crossed, peering out at us from under your bushy eyebrows, a wry smile on your craggy features, and leave us with a feeling that we were a part of, a culmination of that "history" you were teaching us. The battles, elections, kings and philosophies all became part of our own development, the moulding of our own age. If Pearsons Hall was not the playing fields of Eton, it was in some small way a Southern California equivalent.

Perhaps your perspectives on teaching have changed over the last decade. Certainly my perspectives on the place of Anglo-American contributions to the present have shifted. The confidence of the early 1960's is gone, the great hopes of 1968-1970 have faded into the pessimism of today. But some of us departing from Pomona had and still have a vision of mankind (and our non-human comrades) which impells us to share and contribute our riches in her service. You, departing, leave behind you the knowledge that you have added to the riches, in spirit and thought and insight, of a generation if not conquering, at least still trying to muddle through.

Best wishes to your family, and to you for a rich and happy new phase to a full life.

Sincerely,

Douglass Adair (III)